The Influence of the War in Iraq on Transatlantic Relations

Wojciech Lewandowski
Warsaw University
w.lewandowski@uw.edu.pl

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University of Sussex, Arts A Building
Falmer, Brighton BN1 9RG
Tel: 01273 678578
Fax: 01273 678571
E-mail: sei@sussex.ac.uk

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Abstract

The recent war in Iraq was a turning point in Transatlantic relations. It showed the full scope of differences that have arisen over the last fifteen years between Unites States and their European allies. The different visions of post Cold War order and different approaches to the world's security system were revealed by the attitude to the possible conflict in Iraq. United States and few European states were pushing for war while most of European countries were against it.

As the conflict over the war in Iraq was progressing, questions on the future of the Transatlantic Relations were raised again. Is it possible for the transatlantic community to stay unchanged after the war in Iraq? In what possible way could the cooperation between members of the transatlantic world evolve? Is the break inevitable or will new solutions be born that would preserve Euro-American links? Is preserving of this cooperation really necessary for any of the actors?

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Introduction

"It is time to stop pretending that Europeans and Americans share a common view of the world, or even that they occupy the same world. On the all-important question of power – the efficacy of power, the morality of power, the desirability of power – American and European perspectives are diverging. Europe is turning away from power, or to put it a little differently, it is moving beyond power into a self-contained world of laws and rules and transnational negotiation and cooperation. It is entering a post-historical paradise of peace and relative prosperity, the realization of Kant's "Perpetual Peace". The United States, meanwhile remains mired in history, exercising power in the anarchic Hobbesian world where international laws and rules are unreliable and where true security and the defence and promotion of liberal order still depend on the possession and use of military might"[1]. Robert Kagan's division between Kantian Europe and Hobbesian America seems to be a good tool to analyze the future scope of transatlantic relations in terms of its possible development or demise.

Since the end of the Cold War it has become clear that a new model for Euro-American relations should be established. However, there were serious doubts concerning the shape of it. The unipolar world that had emerged after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the United States' role as the only superpower capable of becoming the world's hegemon, created serious tensions on both sides of the Atlantic, especially in Europe. Therefore, the new world order in which the transatlantic community was to cooperate in all major issues on the international scene proved to be unrealistic. The recent war in Iraq was a catalyst for both sides to reveal their views on the new world structure with a revised role for Europe or at least for a part of it.

Is it possible for the transatlantic community to stay unchanged after the war in Iraq? In what possible way could the cooperation between members of the transatlantic world evolve? Is the break inevitable or will new solutions be born that preserve Euro-American links? Is preserving of this cooperation really necessary for any of the actors?

[1] Robert Kagan, *Power and Weakness*, "Policy Review", No. 113, June 2002, http//www.policyreview.org/JUN02/kagan_print.html (19.06.2003).

The aim of this paper is to show how the conflict over Iraq influenced and will influence transatlantic debate in the future. In order to fulfill this aim it is necessary to take a brief look at the development of Euro-American relations since the end of the Cold War to the present day. It is important to reconstruct how both sides have viewed each other during the last fifteen years and how it influenced their view of the Iraq issue. The 11th of September and the following war on terrorism[2] are also essential components of this puzzle. But the most important factor is the debate between the war advocates and their oponents that shows how different visions of the new world's security dominated political actions on the opposite shores of Atlantic.

The Emergence of the New Transatlantic Bounds

The end of the Cold War fundamentally changed the scope of transatlantic relations. The bipolar world, with two rival superpowers, had been removed, but there was no clear alternative for the future. Taking into consideration all the Cold War damage that had been created over the previous forty-odd years to the European continent, the future of Europe and its links with America were unpredictable. Scars of the Cold War needed to be cured quickly and deeply.

According to former-French Prime Minister Michel Rocard: "Three features characterized the Cold War period and shaped transatlantic relations. The first was bipolarity (…)"[3]. The consequence of this was the strict division of the world into two ideologically different alliances that played decisive roles on the international political scene. The differences of opinions among the members of these rival blocs would occur, but they had no influence on the main East-West conflict.

"The preeminence of the political alliances was reinforced by the second characteristic feature of this period: nuclear weapons"[4]. This feature was the main assumption of the policy of deterrence. World peace depended on the existence of increasingly more sophisticated weapons on rival sides. That fragile balance was, however very effective in keeping both

[2] The war on terrorism was the Bush administration's immediate reaction to the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon of 11 September 2001. The aim of this unique war is to prevent terrorism from spreading across the world and to remove, if possible, the sources of the terrorist threat.
[3] Michel Rocard, *Toward a Redefinition of Transatlantic Relations*, in Henry Brandon (ed.), *In Search of a New World Order. The Future of US European Relations*, The Brookings Institution, Washington DC 1992, p.37.
[4] Ibid, p.37.

counterparts at a safe distance. The constant fear of possible supremacy of one of the actors prevented both the Soviet Union and the Western bloc from risking any military confrontation.

According to Rocard, the third characteristic of this period was "the creation of a permanent institution designed to respond to the dual threat, political and military, from the Soviet Union that hung over Europe"[5]. This was done by designing the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) as an institution aimed at protecting the western world from a Soviet threat. NATO was hence, as Rocard argues, a body with not only military but also political functions, because it was created during the period when both of these spheres were "inextricably bound"[6]. This link between the political and military functions of NATO was used in the 1990s to justify the further existence of the Alliance after the collapse of the major threat to Western Europe – the Soviet Union.

These three features determined the political situation in Europe for the whole Cold War period. Peace meant division and strong dependence on American military capabilities to deter the Soviet Union from dominating the West. For some European governments this situation was very difficult and they tried to keep as much independence from external influences as it was possible. This was the case of France that was willing to cooperate with the United States and be a member of common political and security organizations but on its own terms.

The three features mentioned above also determined the way in which transatlantic relations evolved after the collapse of the Soviet Union. They also influenced the changes on the political map of Europe. The emergence of new states, the disappearance of the old threats and the political aspirations of free Central and Eastern European countries created the need for developing a new way of cooperation across the Atlantic, based on more equal burden sharing. It is important to note that Europeans as well as Americans had different visions of that cooperation.

After the end of the Cold War the threat of global confrontation between the superpowers and their allies was replaced (after 1989) by a set of new threats connected with local conflicts in

[5] Ibid, p.38.
[6] Idem. In his view, the discussion over only the political or the military foundation of NATO was useless.

post-socialist republics. Stabilization of the new Central and Eastern European democracies was the most challenging task that Western Europe ever faced. This included dealing with ethnic conflicts particularly in former Yugoslavia.

For the member states of the European Union (EU), in order to manage all these challenges a new approach was necessary as more coordination in the field of foreign policy was needed. The old framework of European Political Cooperation (EPC) was no longer sufficient. Along with the changes in conducting foreign policy there was a need for changes in the field of security. Europeans realized that in such changed geopolitical conditions, the United States may no longer be interested in providing a security umbrella over Europe and that they were now responsible for their own security.

The supposed answer to the new situation was the Treaty of Maastricht that brought into existence the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP),[7] which created a limited platform of cooperation between the member states. This Treaty was the result of an extensive negotiation process between countries unwilling to lose their traditional aspects of sovereignty. Therefore, cooperation in the field of foreign and security policy was limited and thus insufficient to cope with the challenge posed by the conflict in former-Yugoslavia particularly as the decision process was too slow to keep up with the evolution of the situation. Neither was the EU willing to send troops to the region. This European lack of ability to enforce a ceasefire forced NATO to take over. The first examination of European security abilities had failed[8].

This failure forced EU governments to discuss improvements for CFSP during the 1996 Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) that prepared the Treaty of Amsterdam. This Treaty modified the decision making procedure to make it more effective by extending the use of Qualified Majority Voting (QMV) and by introducing constructive abstention[9]. It also introduced in Article 11 a new CFSP objective that is crucial to any analysis of the Iraqi issue, "the safeguard of the integrity of the Union in conformity with the principles of the UN

[7] Pre-CFSP is well covered in: Cameron Fraser, *The Foreign and Security Policy of the European Union. Past, Present and Future*, UACES, Sheffield Academic Press 1999, pp.15-22.

[8] For detailed information on the first years of CFSP see: ibid, pp.27-32 and 43-56. For a good analysis of the foreign affairs regulations in the Treaty of Maastricht see: Jörg Monar, *The Foreign Affairs System of the Maastricht Treaty: A Combined Assessment of the CFSP and EC External Relations Elements*, w: Jörg Monar, Werner Ungerer, Wolfgang Wessels (eds.), *The Maastricht Treaty on European Union. Legal Complexity and Political Dynamic*, European Interuniversity Press, Brussels 1993.

[9] The aim of constructive abstention was to improve the quality of EU action by allowing the member states that are not willing to participate in certain operations undertaken by the Union the opportunity to stay away. Increased use of QMV was aimed at the democratization of CFSP decision process and the improvement of its effectiveness. Member States wanted to reduce unanimity as the basic rule of CFSP decision-making (still the basic rule by introduction of this two alternatives mentioned above.

Charter"[10]. This obligation can give a good explanation of the resistance to support an illegal military operation in Iraq by most of the European Union countries[11]. The improved coordination of CFSP action was supposed to be supervised by the High Representative for CFSP[12].

The field of security is a special dimension of European cooperation. Article J.4 of the Maastricht Treaty stated that CFSP "shall include all questions related to the security of the Union, including the eventual framing of a common defence policy, which might in time lead to a common defence"[13]. More importantly, the Western European Union (WEU) was recognized as an integral part of the EU's evolution. The Treaty of Amsterdam created a possibility for the incorporation of the WEU into the EU.

The so called 'institutional maze' is the biggest problem of European Security. There are a set of institutions which are responsible for providing security for Europe: United Nations (UN), European Union, Western European Union, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, European Association of Political Consultants (EPAC), Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), G7/8 and Contact Group[14]. To some extent the continued existence of all of these institutions are useful. Cooperation among these political organisms can produce impressive effects but each of them has certain limitations. In my opinion, it would be of use to create, within the EU, a unified mechanism able to deal with all security and defence issues, so that united Europe can speak with one voice.

The WEU had all the attributes for becoming the military arm of the EU. Ten of the fifteen EU members had full membership[15] and most of the EU candidate countries were involved. The WEU had lain dormant for almost forty years until it was resurrected in the early 1990s. In June 1992, the meeting of foreign and defence ministers in Petersberg, Germany, decided to change the WEU's main role from collective defence to crisis management, peace support and humanitarian missions[16]. The Petersberg Declaration enumerated the new responsibilities

[10] Ibid, p.64.
[11] Except Great Britain.
[12] Javier Solana, former General Secretary of NATO.
[13] Fraser Cameron, *op cit*., p.25. The difference between common defence policy and common defence is well analyzed in John Roper, *Defining a common defence policy and common defence*, in: Laurence Martin, John Roper (eds.), *Towards a common defence policy*, The Institute for Security Studies, Western European Union, Paris 1995, pp.7-12.
[14] Ibid, p.71.
[15] We need to keep in mind that there are four kinds of membership in the WEU – the other five EU members have observer status.
[16] Known as 'Petersberg Tasks".

of WEU and reaffirmed that NATO was still the main defence institution of Europe. These Petersberg Tasks were duly incorporated into the EU's Treaty of Amsterdam.

The Saint Malo Declaration of December 1998 was a crucial step in the development of a common defence policy. Jacques Chirac and Tony Blair announced that the EU needed "the capacity for autonomous action backed up by credible military forces, the means to decide to use them and a readiness to do so, in order to respond to international crises"[17]. This meant that the WEU could take action even without the participation of NATO. This was an important step toward European defence independence.

Another step towards creating effective European defence occurred at the Cologne European Council in June 1999 where a security and defence policy was defined as an EU objective. ESDP embodied the old European Security and Defence Identity (ESDI) concept discussed in NATO since 1994. Another important event was the naming of Javier Solana as WEU Secretary-General in order to better coordinate the processes within CFSP. Additionally, at Cologne more goverments decided to join Eurocorps and cooperation between defence institutions of the member states was tightened.

In December 1999 at the Helsinki European Council EU leaders decided to achieve a "headline goal" which created the ability of the EU to deploy and sustain forces capable of fulfilling Petersberg Tasks up to corps level. Together with the military "headline goal" a "non-military" headline goal" for crisis management was likewise formulated. It included "the deployment of civilian police to a trouble-zone, the training of local administrators or the provision of judicial officers"[18].

The development of CFSP and ESDI and then ESDP was evaluated with much caution on the other side of the Atlantic. In general America's reaction was positive but it included certain doubts. Stanley R. Sloan distinguishes three American approaches to European integration in this field.[19]

[17] "Saint Malo Declaration" December 1998; quoted in: Giles Andreani, Christoph Bertram, Charles Grant, *Europe's military revolution*, Centre for European Reform, March 2001, p.20.
[18] Ibid, p.23.
[19] Stanley R. Sloan, *The United States and European Defence*, Institute for Security Studies Western European Union, Paris, April 2000, p.4-5.

According to the first approach shared by some experts and officials, "there is still tendency to support European integration because of the belief that it generally reaffirms American values and benefits US interests"[20]. Sloan calls this approach the "traditionalist" school. He locates it in the center of the US political spectrum. "Traditionalists" are in favor of further and deeper integration, because this could have a positive influence on the continuation of transatlantic cooperation.

The second approach Sloan called the "domestic interests" school that "sees the EU as a part of the answer to the need for the United States to respond more effectively to its internal agenda".[21] This approach sees European defence integration as relieving America's global security burden. If the Europeans were more capable of taking care of their own security then American help would no longer be necessary. In this way, the best solution would be a Europe capable of taking full responsibility for its security and also taking on some form of international leadership role. This school represents the popular tendency in America to decrease American spending on international security. Just after the end of the Cold War voices were raised to reduce American military presence on the old continent. It was time for Europe to take care of itself. Unequal burden-sharing in NATO should have been stopped.

To a great extent Bill Clinton's administration adopted this point of view that required reducing America's presence in parts of the world where it was no longer necessary (in Europe for example). The number of American soldiers stationed in Europe was duly reduced significantly.[22] Clinton's administration supported ESDI and then the creation of ESDP but with certain reservations described as the "three Ds"[23]. European efforts were generally supported unless they undermined the significance of NATO or American leadership within the Alliance. More importantly, they created more equal burden-sharing.

The last approach can be called the "US security interests" school. This school is not enthusiastic about European integration and its benefits for the US. Its proponents suggest that the "United States must actively defend its interests in the European integration process and should, if necessary, disrupt EU consensus if such might operate against US self-interests"[24].

[20] Ibid, p.5.
[21] Ibid, p.5.
[22] Further changes to the deployment of US troops are being considered by Bush's administration. After Germany's refusal to support the military operation in Iraq some voices in Washington suggested moving troops form the territory of the disloyal ally to always ready for cooperation Poland.
[23] I will return to this later in this section.
[24] Ibid, p.5.

Put simply, European integration without the Soviet threat is dangerous for the US. It seems that this way of seeing European integration was, effectively, adopted by George W. Bush's administration. From this viewpoint, European integration aimed at creating independent military capabilities is a direct threat to American imperial policy. It endangers the US's position of the sole superpower, a hegemon capable of leading the whole western world[25]. This leadership is based on the belief that Americans and Europeans share the same values and therefore there should not be much difference in their ways of seeing the world. Basically the assessment of threats and of ways to deal with them should be the same. The US as the sole superpower is predestined to lead the world to future happiness[26]. Therefore an independent Europe with its own vision of crisis management has no right to exist.

This tendency was strengthened after the 11th of September attacks. In the immediate aftermath it seemed that European solidarity and the will to conduct war against terrorism with the US on an equal basis would lead to the creation of a successful cooperation formula. But as soon as the war on terrorism started to include actions that were unacceptable to European allies such as, for example, the invasion of Iraq. Attitudes toward the so called "rogue states"[27] and the methods of conducting the war on terrorism divided the allies. For Americans, pure force was the best solution, Europeans wanted first to destroy the social basis of terrorism, with force relegated to an option of last resort.

NATO – future of the alliance

The problem of NATO is also a transatlantic problem. Is there any role for NATO after the end of the Cold War? Its main function was to protect Europe against the Soviet threat. Now when this threat is absent, is there a reason for NATO's existence? John S. Duffield claims that there are at least three reasons why NATO is still necessary[28]. The first is the presence of an external threat that sufficiently justifies the perpetuation of the Alliance. NATO could still serve as a basic security institution against these potential dangers. The second reason is "NATO's capacity for institutional adaptation"[29]. After the end of the Cold War NATO developed at least two new functions: "containing and controlling militarized conflicts in

[25] An appropriate word to describe America's predominance is *hyperpuissance* as introduced by French Foreign Minister Hubert Védrine.
[26] This way of thinking has its source in the concept of Manifest Destiny as well as in the Declaration of Independence.
[27] For example: Iraq, Iran, North Korea, Syria etc.
[28] John S. Duffield, *NATO's Functions after the Cold War*, "Political Science Quarterly", Vol.109, Issue 5, Winter 1994-95, pp.766-767.
[29] Ibid, p.767.

Central and Eastern Europe"[30] and also preventing conflicts by promoting stability in the former socialist states[31]. The third main reason for the preservation of NATO is its important role for intra-alliance cooperation (stabilization of Western Europe, development of common security policies)[32]. Thus, NATO can still serve Europe as a means of protection against possible threats and it can also protect (mainly economic) American interests in Europe.

The discussion about the role of NATO also raised the question of an institutional alternative to NATO. To some extent this could have been provided by the WEU. One of the steps leading to a more coherent European military cooperation was the support of ESDI by European members of NATO. ESDI was warmly welcomed by the US administration as the European initiative that was not directed against NATO but on improving its European pillar. However, the Saint Malo Declaration was not welcomed so warmly. An autonomous European defence was too much for the Americans. Madeline Albright, then American Secretary of State, expressed the Clinton administration's concern in terms of the famous formula of the "three Ds"[33] mentioned above.

The first "D" was "no Decoupling", reflecting the American fear of the Europeans turning away from NATO as they create European defence capabilities. "This first D also covered the more specific fear of a <<European caucus>> within NATO. The Americans do not want the EU to turn up to a NATO meeting with a pre-cooked line and say that it is not negotiable"[34]. This way of thinking was flawed in terms of the nature of European decision-making. EU positions are always open to discussion; a reasonable level of transparency within NATO should be enough to allay this fear.

The Second "D" stands for "no Duplication" and refers to American fears of a solely European military planning system (resembling SHAPE) and a purely European reconnaissance satellite system. This would mean a waste of money that could be better spent on improving European capabilities. If Europeans really think about autonomous operations they will need to duplicate some of the processes now done within NATO. However Europeans are not planning to duplicate everything, for example they plan to use the same

[30] Idem.
[31] For a more detailed analysis of NATO's external role see ibid, pp.767-772.
[32] More detailed analysis of intra-alliance functions of NATO in: ibid, pp.772-778.
[33] For detailed analysis of "Three Ds" see: Giles Andreani, Christoph Bertram, Charles Grant, op. cit., pp.30-32; Stanley R. Sloan, op. cit., pp.15-20.
[34] Giles Andreani, Christoph Bertram, Charles Grant, *Europe's,* op. cit, p.30.

troops for European and NATO missions, as well as to make European assets available for NATO.

The third "D" stands for "no Discrimination" and is aimed at protecting the interests of NATO's non-EU members. The EU tried to include those countries in its decision-making process as much as possible. But it was obvious from the beginning that non-EU members wouldn't be able to block any action EU members may decide to take[35].

The second "D" highlights one of the most serious problems the EU would have to face in the process of military integration: improving capabilities, which might mean increasing defence expenditure. The recent tendency had been to decrease such expenditure due to the fact that no serious conflict was threatening Europe. But if European governments are seriously thinking about common defence, the situation should change within a few years[36]. The British government was often encouraging other EU governments to increase their defence spending. With no agreement on this issue the process of European defence integration will have to be stopped.

Along with the increase in defence spending a programme of consolidation for the European arms industry must also be established; the success of Airbus being a good example. Therefore the creation of a pan-European, effective and competitive, arms industry could lead to the speeding up of defence integration in Europe.

Another divisive issue in transatlantic dialogue is the problem of "the organization of the first choice"[37]. Should the EU meet first or should NATO? Who should decide first about the form of action in the face of a crisis? Fortunately this problem is purely theoretical. In real life both organizations cooperate closely in the face of a crisis. Of course it is possible that the EU will be able to decide to act even when NATO decides not to. But any EU action of this kind would also be discussed within NATO where the 11 EU states are members.

So, the state of transatlantic relations in general and especially in the field of security is defined by various conditions and by good will on both sides. Unfortunately the line of

[35] An interesting summary of American anxieties concerning European defence integration can be found in: Charles A. Kupchan, *In Defence of European Defence: An American Perspective*, "Survival", vol.42. no.2, Summer 2000.
[36] Data on military spending in EU member states and in the US can be found in, Giles Andreani, Christoph Bertram, Charles Grant, *Europe's,* op. cit. p.63.
[37] Ibid, p.20.

American politics adopted by Bush's administration is defined by the simple maxim "you are with us or against us" and that means that if you have a different opinion you are the enemy. This approach taken together with Europe's aspirations for more independence puts the future of transatlantic relations in doubt, as the example of the Iraqi conflict has revealed.

Iraq - Lines of Division

Tensions over the Anglo-American invasion of Iraq deepened the transatlantic rift. It was the culmination of the long confrontation between the sole superpower and the rest of the transatlantic. Europe, in general, objected to the coalition forces' invasion in Iraq. Societies of Europe, even Britain and Poland,[38] pronounced a firm "no", to the plans of an unjust war that lacked UN support. But political leaders in these countries decided against their societies and supported the American led operation.

Iraq[39] is the country that has been able to both unite and divide the transatlantic partners. The Gulf war of 1991 represented relatively smooth cooperation between partners. Both sides acted under the mandate from UN Security Council (UNSC). "After the Gulf War the United States led the international community in imposing economic sanctions on Iraq and developing, through the United Nations, an inspections program to discover, dismantle, and destroy Iraq's remaining long-range missiles and weapons of mass destruction"[40]. Enforcing the no-fly zones over northern and, later, southern Iraq were actions supported by some members of the coalition.

But the partners would not stand firm forever. Tensions over the policy towards Iraq appeared almost immediately after the conflict had ended. Although the transatlantic partners were able to reach agreement over various issues such as sanctions and inspections, tensions would arise in the UNSC. The US was trying to maintain as much pressure as possible on Saddam's regime in order to force him to cooperate with the UN. However, another member of the UNSC, namely France, felt that "eight years of sanctions and occasional military actions,

[38] Both British and Polish goverments decided to send troops to Iraq, despite negative public opinion.
[39] A good account of the contemporary history of Iraq can be found in: Geoff Simons, *Iraq: From Sumer to Saddam*, Macmillan Press Ltd., London 1996, pp.271-381. The author shows in detail the way in which Saddam and the Baath Party came to power and analyses the way Iraq was governed. He also gives a sophisticated description on the main conflicts in which Iraq was involved during Saddam's rule. Readers interested in a biographic portrait of Saddam Hussein may find it interesting to explore Con Coughlin's book *Saddam. The Secret Life*, Pan Macmillan, Basingstoke and Oxford 2002.
[40] Kenneth I Juster., *Iraq: An American Perspective*, in Haass Richard N. (ed.), *Transatlantic Tensions. The United States, Europe and Problem Countries*, Brookings Institution Press, Washington DC 1999, p.102.

while failing to change or oust Saddam Hussein, have inflicted great suffering on the Iraqi people"[41]. Therefore some changes in the policy towards Iraq had to be made. France wanted, according to Dominique Moisi, "some kind of <<light at the end of the tunnel>>"[42]. The French proposed to partially lift the sanctions on Iraq as a reward for cooperation with the UN, and to create the prospect of lifting the sanctions on the condition that Iraq fulfils all the resolutions of the UNSC.[43]

Thanks to the French efforts, sanctions against Iraq had been partially removed; and restrictions on Iraqi oil exports were eased (under the framework of "Food for Oil" program). The US and Britain were opting for retaining the sanctions and, if necessary, the use of force. This situation lasted until the US' radical political shift following 9/11.[44]

Iraq was included in Bush's "Axis of Evil" together with Iran and North Korea. It became clear that it might be the next target in America's war against terrorism. After the success of the military operation in Afghanistan, the American administration started to see the removal of Saddam Hussein as the prerequisite for US security. The reason for this was cited as the Iraqi development of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) and the regime's unwillingness to cooperate with the international community. In the September 2002 document *A Decade of Deception and Defiance. Saddam Hussein's Defiance of the United Nations*, all the sins of the Iraqi administration were enumerated.[45] This background paper for Bush's speech at the UN General Assembly, mentioned six areas where Saddam's regime had violated UN resolutions or had become a threat to international peace and security:

- development of WMD;
- repression of the Iraqi people;
- support of international terrorism;
- refusal to account for Gulf War prisoners;

[41] Ibid, p.107.
[42] Dominique Moisi, *Iraq*, in Richard H. Haass (ed.), op. cit., p.134.
[43] For a detailed study on the influence of UN sanctions on Iraq see: *Sanctions on Iraq. Background, Consequences, Strategies*, Proceedings of the Conference hosted by the Campaign Against Sanctions on Iraq, 13-14 November 1999, Cambridge 2000.
[44] An interesting discussion concerning the American foreign policy before and after 11 September can be found in**:** Bożena Ojrzyńska (oprac.), *"Przełom czy kontynuacja?". Polityka zagraniczna Georga W. Busha przed i po 11 września 2001*, Centrum Stosunków Międzynarodowych, Raporty i Analizy, 11/01.
[45] White House, *A Decade of Deception and Defiance. Saddam Hussein's Defiance of the United Nations*, September 12, 2002, www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/09/iraqdecade.pdf (05.06.2003).

- refusal to return stolen property;
- efforts to circumvent economic sanctions[46].

This was the clearest presentation of the American position that claimed the Iraqi regime was a threat to US security.

The European assessment of the Iraqi threat, although the British and Polish positions must be noted,[47] was different. The Iraqi regime was not favored in Europe but it was not seen as a threat to international security. There was not enough evidence that the development of WMD had gone as far as the American documents claimed. There were also doubts as to whether force was the only solution. Some Europeans questioned the American push toward war and they proposed an inspections scheme and further discussions at the UNSC.

The Transatlantic debate circulated around several main issues. Philip H. Gordon presented the whole scope of the discussion in his paper *Iraq: the transatlantic debate*[48]. He enumerated the arguments for and against the war on Iraq. Gordon mentions six pro war arguments[49] used by the war's advocates (US, United Kingdom and Poland)[50]:

1. nuclear weapons could lead Saddam to risk aggression against his neighbours and seek to dominate the Middle East;
2. the risk of WMD falling into the hands of terrorists;
3. maintaining an effective inspections regime may be impossible;
4. the cost of status quo;
5. upholding international law and the authority of the Security Council
6. pressure to disarm.

In opposition to these he shows the argumentation against the war (as pushed by France, Germany and some other European countries)[51]:

1. the potential military risks and costs are too high;

[46] To the arguments presented in this document I will return later in this paper.
[47] The Italian and Spannish governments were also in favour of the military solution but did not provide troops.
[48] Philip H. Gordon, *Iraq: the transatlantic debate*, Occasional Papers, no.39, Institute for Security Studies, European Union, Paris – December 2002.
[49] Ibid, pp.8-11.
[50] Italy and Spain may also be included in the pro-war group.
[51] Ibid, pp.12-14.

2. the ‘day after’ problem;
3. undermining the war on terrorism;
4. unilateral invasion would set a dangerous precedent.

The worst nightmare for the war’s advocates was that the Iraqi regime might obtain nuclear weapons. This situation might lead Saddam to attack neighbouring countries and to seek domination in the wider Arab world. As evidence for such a possibility, Iraq’s previous invasions of Iran and Kuwait were presented. Related to this was the problem of Iraq possessing, developing or acquiring chemical and biological WMD As the war’s adherents claimed, nothing would prevent Saddam from using these weapons as he had done before.[52] This could become another basis for his possible dominance of the region. Another serious concern was the possibility that WMD could be passed by Saddam to radical Islamic terrorist organizations.

Ivan Eland and Bernard Gorley[53] argue that the possibility of Saddam using non-conventional weapons was highly unlikely. They claim that Saddam was a rational politician aware of the consequences of his actions. The Bush Administration was right to note that Saddam “has a history of breaking the international norm against using chemical weapons”,[54] but these incidents happened under entirely different historical and political circumstances. “There are some boundaries that Hussein won’t cross because he knows they will lead to his own political destruction’[55]. The use of such weapons would have constituted such a boundary because the subsequent retaliation from the international community (or the United States alone) would have brought an end to his regime. Saddam had shown in the past his determination to stay in power at any price and hence it was unlikely that he would participate in any action that would endanger his position (and him personally). The objection raised by Eland and Gorley showed the possibility of containing Saddam’s regime, rather than removing it.

War advocates claimed that it was no longer possible to conduct rigorous and detailed inspections to ensure that Saddam’s regime was not in possession of nuclear weapons and

[52] Saddam used chemical weapons in the early stages of the Iraq-Iran war and in 1988 against two Kurdish villages. He had been supplied with chemical weapons by the United States.
[53] Eland Ivan, Gourley Bernard, *Why the United States Should Not Attack Iraq*, “Policy Analysis”, No. 464, CATO Institute, December 17, 2002.
[54] Ibid, p.3. See also note 52.
[55] Idem.

WMD. Iraq is too big a country for this to be done properly; WMD could easily be hidden or transported to other countries in the region (Syria, Iran) across fairly porous borders. Besides, Iraq was not willing to co-operate. The regime had already expelled UN inspectors from the country once before, so there was no guarantee that this situation would not be repeated. This would have constituted a violation of UNSC Resolution 1441 and would have provided sufficient justification for military intervention.

Iraq under Saddam was a source of great instability in the region and so the costs of the existing status quo had become too high. Saddam was a threat to the region and to the West. There was no chance of changing that situation in the near future if Saddam remained in power. This would have meant retaining the sanctions regime whilst British and US troops remained in the region, at great cost to both countries and also serving to foster radical Islamism and terrorism.

Iraq had been violating UN resolutions for more than 10 years. This situation had to change, as Saddam's disrespect for international order was undermining the prestige of the UN. With Iraq being unwilling to even return the stolen property[56], it was highly unlikely that it would comply with the Resolutions concerning WMD.

Only the threat of military action would have forced Iraq to disarm, the war advocates claimed. Without a credible military threat all efforts to make Iraq comply with UNSC Resolutions could not succeed. European governments had often pressured Iraq with political tools but without a military dimension these attempts were proving futile.

Another reason for attacking Iraq, not mentioned by Gordon, was Saddam's refusal to stop repressing his own people.

Saddam has repeatedly violated these provisions[57] and has: expanded his violence against women and children; continued his horrific torture and execution of innocent Iraqis; continued to violate the basic human rights of the Iraqi people; and has continued to control all sources of information (…). Saddam Hussein has also harassed humanitarian aid workers;

[56] The property stolen by Iraq during their invasion of Kuwait.
[57] UNSC Resolution 668 (April 5 1991) required an end to the repression of the Iraqi people and immediate access for international inspections.

expanded his crimes against Muslims; he has withheld food from families that fail to offer their children to his regime; and he has continued to subject Iraqis to unfair imprisonment.[58]

Accusations concerning human rights abuse formed a major part of aforementioned *A Decade of Deception and Defiance*.[59] Perhaps the only way to stop these practices, as argued by the Bush Administration, was to change the regime in Baghdad. But, as John J. Mearsheimer and Stephen M. Walt pointed out, "Saddam is a cruel despot, but plenty of other leaders have bloody hands and we aren't thinking about going after them".[60] As a result, the "humanitarian" argument of pro-war advocates was relatively unclear.

Arguments against the war were seen by the Administration as inherently European. In this view, Europe was more focused on internal problems than on global stability. This was only partially true. There were many important reasons why, in the eyes of the Europeans, and many American intellectuals, war was not the best solution.

Proponents of the war claimed the military operation would be relatively easy. The overwhelming power of the Anglo-American forces, supported by other coalition members, would minimize the potential risks and costs of the whole operation. However, as noted by Eland and Gourley, the signal being sent was that Saddam would be removed no matter what. "Our policy insists on regime change in Baghdad and that policy will not be altered whether inspectors go in or not".[61] This situation of the "lack of light at the end of the tunnel" might have lead Saddam to counterattack with all possible means, including WMD (chemical and biological), leading to a greater death toll among coalition soldiers and Iraqi civilians. Another serious risk was that possible urban combat, as Saddam regrouped his army, might likewise lead to serious casualties. In such an urban environment, the coalition's technological superiority would disappear. It was also possible that, in the face of defeat, Saddam would be more willing to transfer WMD to international terrorists.

The problem of the 'day after' was the most serious argument against the war. The general European impression was that the Americans had no vision for Iraq post-Saddam. American

[58] White House, *A decade…*, op cit., p.11. This part of the administration report is based on the: *Country reports on Human Rights Practices – Iraq*, March 4 2002; US Department of State; www.state.gov.
[59] Ibid, pp.11-17.
[60] Mearsheimer John J., Walt Stephen M., *Can Saddam Be Contained? History Says Yes*, http://bscia.ksg.harvard.edu/BSCIA.content/documents/can_saddam_be_contained.pdf., p. 1.
[61] John Bolton, Under-Secretary of State for arms control and international security, quoted in Ivan Eland, Bernard Gourley, *Why…*, op cit., p.7. Originally quoted in: *The Economist*.

declarations about creating a democratic federation seemed to most European governments, even in Britain[62], rather fanciful. It was hard for the war's critics to imagine how the Americans could convince Iraqi ethnic and religious groups (Sunnis, Shias, Kurds and Turkomans) to cooperate. One solution would be the Afghan model that combines members of the exiled opposition with local politicians. The problem that this government would face was the possibility of local uprisings destabilizing the country. This 'day after' problem also included aspirations among the Kurdish minority for independence; an issue that is deeply opposed by Turkey with its own large Kurdish minority.

Another aspect of the 'day after' issue is the necessity for coalition forces to remain in Iraq for an unspecified period. It was obvious that an increased American presence in the region would meet with growing Arab opposition. After the first shock caused by the removal of Saddam's regime, the Iraqis would demand that coalition forces leave the country. In addition, there was the likelihood that terrorist attacks on coalition soldiers might reduce support back in the US. And of course, maintaining a long-term military presence in Iraq would dramatically increase the costs of the whole operation[63].

A separate important issue was whether Iraq could be a democratic state. For most Iraqis democracy is an alien concept. They simply do not have a democratic tradition. The economic and cultural conditions necessary to create democratic values are absent from Iraq. "Iraqi political culture is characterized by <<identity politics>> i.e., the elevation of ethno-religious solidarity over all other values, including individual liberty. Hence, political freedom is an alien concept to them".[64] Saddam's authoritarian rule had also tamed any democratic instinct that might have existed. Iraq's centrally planned economy is another serious obstacle to democratisation. Impoverished people are not interested in political debate or in creating a civil society. Therefore, it was unlikely that democracy could have emerged anytime soon.

For opponents of the war, a protracted engagement would have a negative impact on the war on terror as it would tie up much needed resources. A difficult military campaign, a high number of Arab casualties and a subsequent long military occupation could well push radical

[62] American optimism regarding nation-building contrasted with the skepticism of former colonial states that had tried this and failed.
[63] In contrast to the Gulf War, most of the costs of this military operation would be met by the US as support from most of Europe was unlikely.
[64] Patrick Baham, *Can Iraq Be Democratic?*, Cato Daily Commentary, April 25, 2003, www.cato.org. The problem of democracy building in Iraq is also discussed in: Daniel L. Byman, Kenneth M. Pollack, *Democracy in Iraq?*, "The Washington Quarterly", vol.23, no.3, Summer 2003.

terrorist movements to intensify attacks on Western societies, especially the US. This would undermine the efforts undertaken to prevent terrorist action all over the world. "Ultimately, the only way to overcome terrorism is to recognize that, beyond the terrorists' totally unacceptable methods' they have political goals".[65]

Another anti-war argument was that a unilateral American action would be dangerous for international security. Europeans claimed that any military action against Iraq without UNSC authorization would be illegal.[66] It would also set a precedent for allowing other countries to attack their, usually weaker, neighbours to increase their spheres of influence. Therefore, any preventive action could only be executed under the auspices of the UN. The last argument against military action that was not mentioned by Gordon was the potentially high human cost. Decision-makers needed to take into account possible targeting errors, urban warfare and the consequences of WMD deployment; Iraqi society had, after all, already suffered enormously under the American led UN sanctions regime.[67]

It is also important to acknowledge the differing American and European perception of threats. After 9/11, for many Americansit seemed "clear that terrorists may be planning further massive attacks, including with the use of WMD".[68] Therefore, the American government assumed that terrorism and the development of WMD were the most serious threats it had to face. In Europe, terrorism and WMD were also deemed as important threats but fewer people.[69] Gordon remarked that "unless and until Europe experiences its own 11 September, Europeans will probably remain less worried than Americans about even the remote possibility that WMD developed in Iraq might find their way into the wrong hands".[70]

In a paper devoted to the analysis of the European point of view on Iraq, Martin Ortega examined three possible scenarios for transatlantic cooperation in Iraq.[71] Ortega starts by rejecting the possibility of a peaceful resolution. For him, "The 'no war' scenario is as likely as summer snow".[72] He then highlights two important factors determining transatlantic

[65] Martin Ortega, *Iraq: a European point of view*, Occasional Papers, no.40, Institute for Security Studies, European Union, Paris – December 2002, p.13.
[66] For a very good study concerning the illegality of the military action against Iraq see: *Tearing Up the Rules. The Illegality of Invading Iraq*, The Center for Economic and Social Rights, Emergency Campaign on Iraq, March 2003.
[67] More information about the civilian costs of war in Iraq can be found in: T*he Human Costs of War in Iraq*, The Center for Economic and Social Rights, 2003.
[68] Martin Ortega, *Iraq: a European...*, op.cit., p.10.
[69] See Table 1 in: ibid, p.10.
[70] Philip H. Gordon, *Iraq: the transatlantic…*, op cit., p.16.
[71] Martin Ortega, *Iraq: a European…*, op cit., pp.18-23.
[72] Ibid, p.18.

cooperation. First, if Saddam blocked the implementation of UNSC Resolution 1441, namely UN inspections to determine the state of Iraq's WMD programme, most European governments would support military action. Second, the degree of success obtained by Euro-American negotiations concerning the military operation and postwar arrangements.[73] Based on these factors Ortega enumerated three possible scenarios of transatlantic cooperation depending on the outcome of inspections: 'counter-proliferation', 'save the alliance' and 'worst-case'. These will each be examined in turn.

Under the first scenario, if Iraq violated UNSC Resolutions, regime change would become inevitable because the US and Britain, supported by the Polish, Italian and Spanish governments, would push for war. Elsewhere, Russia would give the green light after short but intensive negotiations, and even the French authorities would reluctantly support the invasion. The military campaign would be short, economic problems would not arise and a deal with possible future Iraqi leaders would help aid Iraq's political reconstruction overseen by coalition forces. A second UNSC Resolution would hence not be needed since Resolution 1441 allowed for a military operation in the event of its violation. International consensus would give the operation the required legitimacy. Some role would also be found for NATO in Iraq's postwar stabilization. "The most positive outcome from this scenario would be a renewed transatlantic dialogue on the Middle East region".[74] For Europe, the 'counter-proliferation' scenario would also have meant greater input in the rebuilding of the region.[75]

The 'save the alliance' scenario was built on the assumption that UNMOVIC[76] inspections would only produce weak evidence of an Iraqi WMD programme and this would lead to major and bitter discussions in the UNSC. Two camps in the Security Council would emerge: a pro-war led by the US and British governments, convinced that even weak evidence would be enough for action, and an anti-war group convinced that Iraq was not a threat. After a long struggle, the UNSC would reach an acrimonious agreement justifying military action. The US would be willing to go it alone, but strong international opposition would force it to liaise with partners. For Ortega, under this scenario, Europe would have a bigger influence on US

[73] Idem.
[74] Ibid, p.20.
[75] Ibid, pp. 19-20.
[76] UN Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission. Its main task was to control Iraq's compliance with UNSC resolutions concerning the possession and development of WMD.

action and the shape of postwar Iraq. Moreover, common action would keep NATO alive but its future would be in question.[77]

The last scenario was based on the inspections finding no evidence of Iraq possessing WMD. Washington would claim that the lack of evidence was the result of Saddam deceiving the UN once again. Most European countries would be against military action, unable to share the American interpretation. British Prime Minister Tony Blair would have trouble from his own party, nevertheless, the US and Britain would decide to launch a military operation with minor support from some EU and NATO members. France, Germany and other EU and NATO members would refuse to take part in any military operation due to a lack of any clear justification. In this way, the Atlantic Alliance's continued existence would be seriously in question and the EU's work on CFSP and ESDP would have to go back to the drawing board, perhaps without British involvement.

This scenario implied that both sides of the transatlantic community were prepared to suffer all the possible consequences of a divorce. The US and Britain, along with a few minor allies, would have to take all the responsibility and criticism for the military action. Their forces would also be vulnerable to terrorist actions. These countries would also need to be prepared to pay all the costs of the operation. For many European governments, this scenario would necessitate a redefinition of their role in the world, especially regarding NATO membership and their position inside the EU.[78]

It has to be acknowledged at this point that UNSC Resolution 1441 has various interpretations. Most European countries believed that "the resolution excludes any 'automatic' military action in the event of violation of its provisions".[79] In the event of violation, a further Resolution would be needed to legalize the war. For the Bush administration, Resolution 1441 was sufficient to launch a military operation. To some extent, both interpretations could have been seen to be correct due to the ambiguous nature of the Resolution's text as a result of the compromise that enabled it to be acceptable to all UNSC permanent members.[80]

[77] Martin Ortega, *Iraq: a European*..., op cit., pp.20-21.
[78] Ibid, pp.21-22. A more dangerous version of the 'worst-case' scenario would have been the 'go it alone' scenario in the event of a British decision not to participate in the war. The US would attack Iraq with help from some minor allies.
[79] Martin Ortega, *Iraq: a European*..., op cit., p.23.
[80] The need of the second resolution and the necessity of United Nations approval of military operation are also discussed in: *Tearing Up*..., op. cit., p. 7-12.

An ambiguous Resolution, the lack of decisive evidence concerning the Iraqi WMD programme, and the unilateral willingness of the Anglo-American coalition to solve the crisis militarily led events to follow the 'worst-case' scenario path. The UNSC permanent members were unable to reach a compromise. Due to the lack of evidence it was highly unlikely that France, Russia and China would support military operation. France duly announced that it would not support a second Resolution giving legitimacy to the use of force. Therefore the American led coalition[81] decided to go to war without UN support. The effect of this action will probably not be as damaging to transatlantic relations as Ortega claims, but they will remain strained for some while to come.

Conclusion – The Future of Transatlantic Relations

Why was there such vehement opposition to the war from much of the European side? Was it due a general European weakness in terms of power projection? Or maybe the explanation lies in the postmodern European will to resolve all problems within a legal framework? Was it an objection to American hyperpower and American disrespect for international law? Or was it simply anti-americanism?

Robert Kagan suggested that European opposition was the result of different philosophical and psychological ways of perceiving the world. In this way, a European lives in a Kantian world where rules are paramount and the use of force is only a last resort and even then under careful supervision. Kagan assumes that the reason why Europeans act in that way is due to the power gap between them and a US that is capable of unprecedented power projection. In this light, the best option for a comparatively militarily weak Europe to sustain global influence is to insist on conducting international politics through the world of norms.[82] Simon Duke explained that in order for the Europeans to be involved in the military action on Iraq they needed to be sure that there was an explicit mandate from the UNSC, something not provided by Resolution 1441. For Kagan, Hobbesian American rule of law does not matter in the face of danger. Thanks to their overwhelming power, Americans are able to act

[81] Named by the anti-war press: the "coalition of bribed and threatened".
[82] Robert Kagan, *Power*..., op. cit. Kagan also shows that Europeans acted in the same manner two hundred years ago as United States now. At that time United States were promoting the rule of law in international politics.

unilaterally even if the whole world is against them; something that simply is not the case for Europeans.[83]

Therefore American actions[84] in this crisis could not be accepted by most European countries.[85] Public opinion in all EU countries was against the war.[86] This attitude might be partly explained by a dislike for American domination, both politically and economically. European societies demand that their politicians act according to long established European values and standards.

The war in Iraq illustrates that the EU should become a more effective actor in the field of foreign and security policy. It needs its own well-developed defence dimension. Without it, the Union will not be able to protect the values of its citizens who decided, often against their own governments, that war in Iraq was not the solution. This was clearly seen in Britain where thousands showed their objection to Blair's support for Bush. European politicians have to transform the EU into a community able to act unanimously on the international scene, even if this goes against American policy.

A strong and united Europe with an autonomous foreign policy is not in US interests. Hence, the Americans wish to prevent Europe from becoming a defence community. However, they fail to notice that the European aim is not to create counterbalance to the US and NATO; rather, it is to create the resources to become a more equal partner. But a more equal partner can have their own point of view and this is dangerous for Americans.

So what is the future for the transatlantic community? The war in Iraq clearly weakened the transatlantic alliance. Relations between former allies have received a serious blow. Everything will depend upon the American ability to accept European norms and cooperation in the reconstruction of Iraq. The problem for the US is that, for various reasons, it cannot do everything alone. Even before the war it was trying to get support from as many countries as possible. It will be extremely important to see how the US views the role of the UN in Iraq's reconstruction. All EU countries, including Britain, are willing to grant a serious role to the

[83] Simon Duke, *The Hyperpower and the Hype: Reassessing transatlantic relations in the Iraqi context*, European Institute of Public Administration, Working Paper, No. 2003/W/1, p. 6-7.
[84] Their way of dealing with the issues of foreign policy can be pejoratively described as Bush's 'cowboy' politics.
[85] They could be reckoned to the Rumsfeld's "old Europe". Indeed the idea of dividing Europe in the way Rumsfeld did it is quite irrelevant. In reality this division does not exist.
[86] Even in Poland, the only candidate country that sent troops into Iraq, most of the society was against the war.

UN in postwar Iraq. The US, meanwhile, is reluctant, seeing the UN as only a minor player in Iraq. At the EU summit closing the Greek presidency of 2003, EU member and candidate countries agreed not to participate in the military actions without a mandate from the UNSC.

Thus, the issue for Europe is to create a credible CFSP and ESDP as soon as possible. Already, France, Germany, Belgium and Luxembourg have decided not to wait for the rest of the EU, and have created a core[87] for future European common foreign and defence policy in the hope that other EU members will follow.

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[87] The idea of such groupings within the EU was discussed during the Convention on the Future of Europe.

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